

Big Cité Beat

MacKie and Kamrath observes its semicentennial this spring, marking for founding partner **Karl Kamrath** a half-century of modern architectural practice in Houston. The firm's first building, a speculative house at 1811 Portsmouth Street, remains in mint condition. Alas, some of its better-known works are faring less well. The **Houston Fire Alarm Building** (1939) in the Civic Center, the first modern public building in Houston, is slated for demolition by the **City of Houston**, which also plans to deface the **City Health Department Building** (1963) in the Texas Medical Center with a gratuitous face-lift. Nearby in the Medical Center, **M.D. Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute** (1954), perhaps MacKie and Kamrath's single most famous building, is now completely surrounded with annexes and additions.

Biting the Dust: Guardian Savings will demolish the **Lang Building** of 1904 on **Market Square**, better known as Warren's. It is the last historic building on the west side of the square and it was occupied by one of the few survivors of Market Square's hey-day as a center of downtown nightlife. **Texaco, Inc.** demolished the 16-story **Medical Arts Building** (1926) at Walker and Caroline, an effusive neo-Gothic extravaganza in cast stone, the second week in February. It was one of a number of "Gothic" skyscrapers designed by the architects Sanguinet, Staats, Hedrick and Gottlieb in Texas during the '20s; it follows into oblivion Medical Arts Buildings in Dallas and Fort Worth.

V. Nia Dorian-Becnel was guest curator for the exhibition "African-American Contributions to Texas Architecture," mounted in January by the

Dallas County Heritage Society in Dallas. New books are popping out all over: **Wolde Ayele's** *Mirage* (Hothouse Press); **Ann Holmes's** *Joy Unconfined* on the work of Houston artist **Robert Joy** (San Jacinto Museum of History); **Peter G. Rowe's** *Design Thinking* (MIT Press); and **Phillip Lopate's** *The Rug Merchant* (Viking Press).

Impresario extraordinario **Scott Harmon** and crew on 7 February pulled off yet another memorable bash, «¡Holá Dalí!», the **Archi-Arts Ball** of 1987 at El Mercado del Sol. The Archi-Arts floor show featured living embodiments of great surrealist works: architectural historian **Richard Ingersoll** was Magritte's "Le Thérapeute" (birds courtesy of printmaker **Karin Broker**). LA's **Diane Ghirardo** jetted in just for the fiesta; she was escorted by architect-about-town **Carlos Jiménez**. Party Houston was represented by king **George O. Jackson, Jr.**, novelist **Olive Hershey Chamberlain**, decked out in black, gold, and bumble-bee wings. A surreal time was had by all.

Spring Architecture Events

Rice Design Alliance
P.O. Box 1892, Houston, Texas
77251-1892, 713/524-6297

1 April-15 April - "Inner Space to Outer Space." Architects' Fireside Chats, a series of informal presentations by three Houston architectural firms of their work and working methods. All presentations will occur in the Jury Room in M.D. Anderson Hall, Rice University, at 8 PM.

Admission free to students, \$2 RDA members, \$5 non-members. Limited seating.

1 April - Sally Walsh, interior designer.

8 April - William T. Cannady, Cannady, Jackson & Ryan.

15 April - Guillermo Trotti, Bell and Trotti, Inc.

26 March - Lecture by Mario Botta, "Recent Works." For reservations and information about both events, telephone the Rice Design Alliance.

Farish Gallery
M.D. Anderson Hall, Rice University,
713-527-4870

3 March-17 April - Exhibition: "Mario Botta." Drawings, photographs, and models of buildings and projects by the Swiss-Italian rationalist architect. Organized by The Museum of Modern Art. Introduced with a lecture.

Greater Houston Preservation Alliance
18 March, 15 April, 20 May - Guided walking tours. For more information, please call Barthel Truxillo at 713/861-6236.

Houston Chapter, American Institute of Architects

20 Greenway Plaza, Suite 246, Houston, Texas 77046-2002, 713/622-2081

15 March, 19 April, 17 May - Guided walking tours.

School of Architecture, Rice University
713/527-4870

9 March, 17 March, 23 March, 30 March - Lectures in architecture; 1 PM, Sewall Hall, Room 301, Rice University campus; admission free.

College of Architecture, University of Houston
713/749-1187

25 February-12 March - "The Shadow of a House;" new tapestries by Laura

Foster Nicholson. The Architecture Gallery.

4 March-8 April - Spring lecture series, "Evolving Perspectives," continues. All lectures at 2:30 PM in the Theater on the UH campus. Sponsored in part by the Brochstein Foundation.

4 March - Robert Klimant, "Recent Work."

11 March - Malcolm Quantrill, "Lateral Mindedness vs. Literal Mindedness in Alvar Aalto's Design Thinking."

1 April - Peter Eisenman, "Realizing the Fault."

8 April - Diane Ghirardo, "Deceit and Meaning in Postmodern Architecture."

Department of Architecture, Texas A&M University
409/845-7851

4 March - Lecture by Peter Davey, editor of *The Architectural Review*. 7 PM in Harrington Auditorium, Room 207; free.

8 April - "The Spirit of Religious Architecture," by Clovis Heimsath. Lecture at 7 PM in Harrington Auditorium, Room 207; free.

20 May-23 May - Architecture Registration Exam Workshop; fee required.

School of Architecture, University of Texas at Austin
512/471-1922

6 March-26 March - Spring lecture series continues. All lectures held at 4 PM, Jessen Auditorium; free to the public unless otherwise noted.

6 March - Peter Davey.

10 March - Michael Graves. Lecture at 6 PM in LBJ Auditorium; registration fee \$5, \$3 students.

25 March - Ricardo Legorreta.

26 March - Ricardo Legorreta.

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